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The Ecclesiology of the WCC: Your Jurisdiction's Membership in Demonic Heresy

By Subdeacon Nektarios, M.A.

Often times Orthodox Christians will come to know that the jurisdiction they are in is part of the World Council of Churches (WCC). They will know that their synod of bishops long ago has taken them into this organization whose sole purpose is the furtherance of the heresy of ecumenism, but they do not know exactly what is heretical about being part of this organization with any specificity or how it affects them.



Orthodox Clergy and Other Heterodox at the World Council of Churches

Most Orthodox Christians within these jurisdictions do not know that they are, in fact, full members of this heretical ecumenical organization and what that exactly means for those who are members. To begin to understand this, we can look at the primary source material provided by the World Council of Churches' official website and their *Constitution and Rules of the World Council of Churches*, which uses very vague, flowery, and broad statements, as well as ecclesiastical terminology outside of its proper context. First, we need to examine what full membership in the World Council of Churches means and how these Orthodox jurisdictions become members. According to the WCC and their meaning of membership they state that, "Scripture very clearly affirms the oneness of Christ's Church (John 17, Eph. 4). Such an affirmation requires that the various churches should not remain in isolation

but should seek to be in relationship with one another" [1]. They continue this statement in a fifteen-point document. Some of these statements say that to be a member means, "sharing with other churches a common ecumenical vision and putting it into practice within the life and witness of each church [...]" It is expressed in the commitment by the members to 'call each other to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship'" [2].

It means "nurturing the ability of churches from differing backgrounds and traditions to pray, live, act and grow together in community" [...] and "It implies the willingness and capacity to deal with disagreement through theological discussion, prayer and dialogue" [3]. "To be a member means participating in ministries that extend beyond the boundaries and possibilities of any single church" [4]. And lastly, it is the responsibility of each member church to "make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council: the amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed" [5].

As we can see, the understanding of the World Council of Churches of itself is entirely ecumenistic in its beliefs and entirely heretical for the Orthodox Church. This organization sees all of these member churches as part of the Church in some fashion. It maintains the goal of not remaining in “isolation” from each other but in a communion that is *not* based on mutually recognized truths of Holy Orthodoxy, but one that is based on a false unity, created out of a unity for the sake of unity, regardless of doctrinal Orthodoxy. Is it within the Orthodox ecclesiological framework that we can believe that there are ministries that cannot be accomplished solely within the Holy Orthodox Church, and that for some reason, we need to look outside our own canonical boundaries to those heretical organizations who are outside of the Orthodox Church and are themselves graceless?

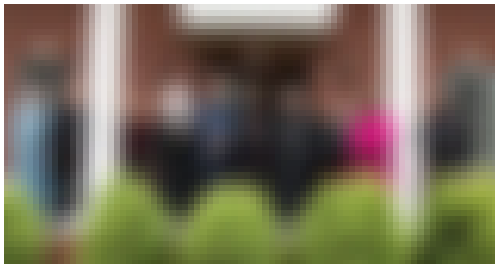


Patriarch Bartholomew at the World Council of Churches April 24th, 2017

Most of the self-understanding statements that come out of the World Council of Churches is largely based on the non-ecclesiological ecclesiology of what is known as the “Toronto Statement,” officially known as the *Ecclesiological Significance of the World Council of Churches Received by the Central Committee at Toronto in 1950 and commended for study and comment in the Churches*. This statement, which presents itself as a statement of non-ecclesiology but in reality is an ecclesiological statement unto itself, states that the WCC is not itself some type of ‘super church’ or a ‘world church.’ However, in the same “Toronto Statement” in subparagraph four, point one, they state that,

The member churches of the Council believe that conversation, cooperation and common witness of the churches must be based on the common recognition that Christ is the Divine Head of the Body. [...] Therefore, no relationship between the churches can have any substance or promise unless it starts with the common submission of the churches to the headship of Jesus Christ in his Church. From different points of view churches ask: “How can men with opposite convictions belong to one and the same federation of the faithful?” A clear answer to that question was given by the Orthodox delegates in Edinburgh 1937 when they said: “in spite of all our differences, our common Master and Lord is one — Jesus Christ who will lead us to a more and more close collaboration for the edifying of the Body of Christ.” The fact of Christ’s headship over his people compels all those who acknowledge him to enter into real and close relationships with each other — even though they differ in many important points [6].

As I mentioned previously, the WCC uses very carefully crafted language that is written to seem benign. However, when reading in detail and with the knowledge of what Holy Orthodoxy teaches, we can see that there are many problematic ecclesiological errors that are not compatible with Orthodoxy. For instance, did any of the apostles teach in the scriptures that we are to “enter into a real and close relationship” with those who are not Orthodox in doctrine and who teach heresy? The Holy Apostle, Saint John the Theologian teaches us, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11, KJV).



Metropolitan Tikhon Attends Luncheon Honoring WCC General Secretary September 6, 2016

Likewise, Saint Paul the Apostle in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians writes on how Christians should conduct ourselves around those heretics who do not have the same doctrine as us saying, “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6, KJV). As we can see from just a few examples of the scriptural epistles, the apostles teach us to not even let a heretic into our home let alone have a close relationship with them in the form of ecumenism and common prayer. This briefly explains what membership means to the World Council of Churches itself, but how does one become a full member of the WCC?

According to the *Constitution and Rules of the World Council of Churches, Membership in the fellowship of the World Council of Churches*, the requirements theologically state:

Applicant churches should give an account of how their faith and witness relate to these norms and practices:

a) Theological

- 1) In its life and witness, the church professes faith in the triune God according to the scriptures, and as this faith is reflected in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.
- 2) The church maintains a ministry of proclaiming the gospel and celebrating the sacraments as understood by its doctrines.
- 3) The church baptizes in the name of the one God, "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" and acknowledges the need to move towards the recognition of the baptism of other churches.
- 4) The church recognizes the presence and activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit outside its own boundaries and prays for the gift of God's wisdom to all in the awareness that other member churches also believe in the Holy Trinity and the saving grace of God.
- 5) The church recognizes in the other member churches of the WCC elements of the true church, even if it does not regard them "as churches in the true and full sense of the word" ("Toronto Statement") [7].

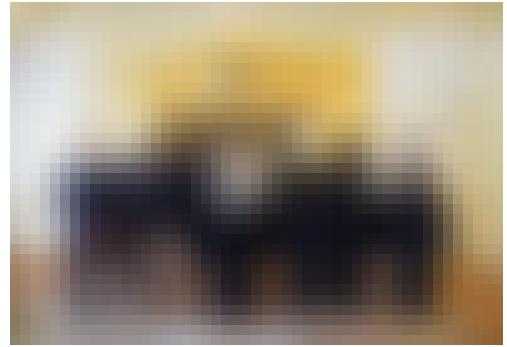
On the surface one might not think there is any problem with these, but there are underlying issues. For point one, is that with the *Filioque* or without? They must practice baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit but in which form? For the Orthodox, the only form that is acceptable is triple immersion in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit which is, for the most part, an entirely rejected practice among those heretical confessions, and which was covered in my article *Absolute Invalidity: Why Heretic "Baptism" is Ineligible for Orthodox Economía*. Furthermore, these modernistic 'Orthodox' jurisdictions have agreed to "move towards recognition of the baptism of other churches" according to this requirement for membership [8]. True Orthodox ecclesiology does not recognize mysteries outside of the Orthodox Church as grace-filled and cannot recognize that they are effectual for salvation. In the writings of Saint Cyprian of Carthage, whose ecclesiology was, in fact, adopted by the Holy Ecumenical Councils, he states concerning so-called baptism outside of the Church that,

Again, the Lord points out and designates these same, saying, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out broken cisterns which can hold no water." Although there can be no other baptism but one, they think that they can baptize; although they forsake the fountain of life, they promise the grace of living and saving water. Men are not washed among them, but rather are made foul; nor are sins purged away, but are even accumulated. Such a nativity does not generate sons to God, but to the devil. By a falsehood they are born, and they do not receive the promises of truth. Begotten of perfidy, they lose the grace of faith. They cannot attain to the reward of peace, since they have broken the Lord's peace with the madness of discord [9].

In their forth point they are requiring that the applicant churches recognize "the presence and activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit outside its own boundaries"? In which way, we need to wonder. Is that in the sense that God acts throughout all creation, calling all to the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, which is the Orthodox Church, or is that in the mysteries as well? The WCC, being a heretical ecumenistic organization that is based on syncretistic ecumenism, we can safely presume that this is not going to be based on doctrinal Orthodoxy as I mentioned previously.

In their fifth point they require that the applicant Churches recognize in other members of the World Council of Churches elements of the true Church but not necessarily regarding them as full churches. How, according to Orthodox dogmatic ecclesiology, is it possible to have any type of unity, especially of that in unity in common prayer, let alone Eucharistic unity with those we do not recognize and cannot recognize as true Churches in the Orthodox sense of the meaning? Is this what the Orthodox Church teaches is acceptable or what is taught in the scriptures by the Holy Apostles? In 2nd Corinthians, Saint Paul teaches us saying,

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? (2 Corinthians 6:14-15, KJV).



WCC General Secretary after the Visit to Moscow
"WCC to be an Instrument of Dialogue." May 17th, 2023

From these various official documents of the World Council of Churches, we can see that these modernistic jurisdictions who have voluntarily entered into the WCC as full members, have agreed to uphold and promulgate the ecclesiology of the World Council of Churches as the WCC understands itself and its view of the "church." In another document from the WCC entitled, *The Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC*, they give more detail as to what is expected of "member churches." This document states that,

As the understanding of the fellowship within the Council has broadened through the churches' life together, so too has the understanding of what is implied by membership in this body.

3.7.1 To be a member means nurturing the ability to pray, live, act and grow together in community—sometimes through struggle and conflict—with churches from differing backgrounds and traditions. It implies the willingness and capacity to deal with disagreement through theological discussion, prayer and dialogue, treating contentious issues as matters for common theological discernment rather than political victory.

3.7.2 To be a member means helping one another to be faithful to the gospel, and questioning one another if any member is perceived to move away from the fundamentals of the faith or obedience to the gospel. The integrity of the fellowship is preserved through the exercise of responsibility for one another in the spirit of common faithfulness to the gospel, rather than by judgment and exclusion.

3.7.3 To be a member means participating in ministries that extend beyond the boundaries and possibilities of any single church and being ready to link one's own specific local context with the global reality and to allow that global reality to have an impact in one's local situation.

3.7.4 To be a member means being part of a fellowship that has a voice of its own. While the churches are free to choose whether or not to identify themselves with the voice of the WCC when it speaks, they are committed to giving serious consideration to what the Council says or does on behalf of the fellowship as a whole.

3.7.5 To be a member means making a commitment to seek to implement within the life and witness of one's own church the agreements reached through joint theological study and reflection by the total fellowship.

3.7.6 To be a member means participating in a fellowship of sharing and solidarity, supporting other members in their needs and struggles, celebrating with them their joys and hopes.

3.7.7 To be a member means understanding the mission of the church as a joint responsibility shared with others, rather than engaging in missionary or evangelistic activities in isolation from each other, much less in competition with or proselytism of other Christian believers.

3.7.8 To be a member means entering into a fellowship of worship and prayer with the other churches, nurturing concrete opportunities for shared worship and prayer while respecting the limitations imposed by specific traditions.

3.7.9 To be a member means taking a full part in the life and work of the WCC and its activities, including praying for the Council and all its member churches, being represented at Assemblies, making regular financial contributions to its work according to one's possibilities and sharing the WCC's concerns with local parishes, congregations and worshipping communities [10].

Again, we can see that the membership in the WCC includes an adoption and adherence to their defined ecclesiology, a full participation in the life and work of the WCC, which also includes joint prayer and worship with heretics in violation of the Apostolic Canons, a ceasing of proselytizing those same heretics and bringing them to the Orthodox faith, and to participate in ministries outside of the boundaries of the Holy Orthodox Church and to promote an ecclesiological globalism based on these expectations. All of these things, as we know, are entirely heretical and are not compatible with the Orthodox Christian ecclesiology and its understanding of herself as the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

The worst part of about these modernistic 'Orthodox' jurisdictions' membership into this syncretistic organization is that they have voluntarily rejected Orthodox ecclesiology, adopted the ecclesiology of the World Councils of Churches, and are paying a large annual fee to the WCC for their own participation in heresy which, of course, is funded by you, the laity and your donations and tithes to the Church.

The next thing that we need to cover is how these so-called local churches have adopted this, how they have created an entirely new doctrine to work around the apostolic canons concerning joint prayer with heretics and entering into the worship space of those heretics. First, we have to look at the particular Apostolic Canons and what they say concerning these two issues and then we can examine how these patriarchates in cooperation with the monophysites have created another definition which meets their syncretistic needs.

The Canons of the Orthodox Church concerning the issue of praying and worshiping with heretics state very plainly the following:

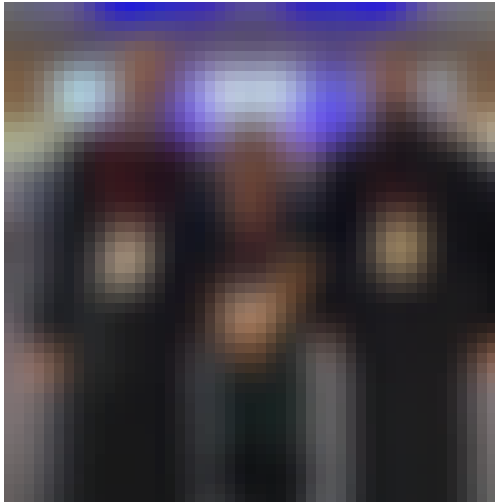
Canon XLV: Let a bishop, presbyter, or deacon, who has only prayed with heretics, be excommunicated: but if he has permitted them to perform any clerical office, let him be deposed [11].

Canon LXIV: If any clergyman or layman shall enter into a synagogue of Jews or heretics to pray, let the former be deposed and let the latter be excommunicated [12].

Canon XXXIII: No one shall join in prayers with heretics or schismatics [13].

There is no confusion and there is no ambiguity when it comes to these Apostolic Canons and most certainly none with the last canon from the Council of Laodicea. However, as one can imagine these canons are major roadblocks to those modernistic jurisdictions who have signed themselves up to become full members of the World Council of Churches. The question is, what exactly have these ecumenistic Orthodox patriarchates and synods said concerning common prayer and common worship services that they are expected to take part of as WCC "member churches?"

This can be seen in the document entitled the *Final report of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC*. "The Commission has been unique in World Council history in being composed of an equal number of representatives appointed by Eastern and Oriental Orthodox [monophysite] churches and representatives from the other churches belonging to the fellowship of the WCC appointed by the central committee. Its co-moderators were Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Ephesus (Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople) and Bishop Rolf Koppe (Evangelical Church in Germany)" [14].



OCA Delegation Sent to Eleventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, October 7, 2022

In this document, *Final report of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC, Section V, Common Prayer, Paragraphs 36-45*, the authors describe their history of common prayer with other heretical members of the WCC and describe how this has proposed challenges to their understanding of unity with these non-Orthodox heretical confessions. However, in paragraphs 42-45, these heretical and syncretistic authors, who are official representatives of some of the official patriarchates and autocephalous synods of "global Orthodoxy," to use the term from Father Seraphim (Rose), have written what they perceive as a theological workaround to the Apostolic Canons [15].

In this document concerning joint prayer, these ecumenist authors state that there is somehow a clear distinction between the types of WCC gatherings that need to be defined and that is a confessional and interconfessional common prayer gathering at WCC events. According to these syncretistic ecumenists, this innovationist doctrine negates the Canons of the Holy Orthodox Church concerning praying with heretics and entering the worship

space of those heretics. The document states,

42. Towards that end, a clear distinction is proposed between "confessional" and "interconfessional" common prayer at WCC gatherings. "Confessional common prayer" is the prayer of a confession, a communion, or a denomination within a confession. Its ecclesial identity is clear. It is offered as a gift to the gathered community by a particular delegation of the participants, even as it invites all to enter into the spirit of prayer. It is conducted and presided over in accordance with its own understanding and practice. "Interconfessional common prayer" is usually prepared for specific ecumenical events. It is an opportunity to celebrate together drawing from the resources of a variety of traditions. Such prayer is rooted in the past experience of the ecumenical community as well as in the gifts of the member churches to each other. But it does not claim to be the worship of any given member church, or of any kind of a hybrid church or super-church. Properly understood and applied, this distinction can free the traditions to express themselves either in their own integrity or in combination, all the while being true to the fact that Christians do not yet experience full unity together, and that the ecumenical bodies in which they participate are not themselves churches (see Appendix A, §§15-18)

43. Thus, the goals of the attached considerations are twofold. One is to clarify that "interconfessional common prayer" at WCC gatherings is not the worship of an ecclesial body. The other is to make practical recommendations for common prayer at WCC gatherings on how to use language, symbols, imagery and rites in ways which would not cause theological, ecclesiological or spiritual offence. To the extent that one can satisfy these goals, common prayer can become something in which all traditions may participate in good conscience, and with theological and spiritual integrity. While it is the hope of the Special Commission that this work will facilitate progress, it is recognized that for some churches, prayer with Christians outside their own tradition is not only uncomfortable, but also considered to be impossible (see Appendix A, §§8-10).

44. Eucharistic worship at ecumenical events has been a difficult issue for the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches. Not all can receive from the same table and there exists a range of views and disciplines among churches belonging to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches on the offering and receiving of the eucharist. Whatever one's views on the eucharist and how it may or may not be shared, the pain of not being able all to receive at the same table is felt by all. Following the pattern of distinguishing between confessional and interconfessional common prayer, confessional celebrations of the eucharist at assemblies and other major events can be accommodated. The hosting church (or group of churches which are able to host together) should be clearly identified. While it should be very clear that the WCC is not "hosting" a eucharist, these confessional eucharistic services, though not part of the official programme, may be publicly announced, with an invitation to all to attend (see Appendix A, §§36-39).

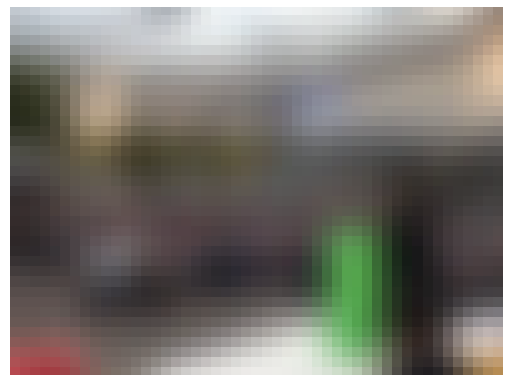
45. Exercising care for each other within the context of the WCC often means raising awareness about the ways in which we might unintentionally offend each other. In this spirit, these considerations seek to make planners of common prayer more aware of potential areas of concern. But these considerations are not comprehensive, and must be met by the sincere intention to develop opportunities for all participants to pray with integrity. As this framework makes clear, common prayer at WCC gatherings should be the result of serious and sensitive planning, and is not a task to be undertaken casually (see Appendix A, §41) [16].

This document authored by official representatives of the "official" patriarchates and synods to the WCC have created a heretical document that all the Orthodox members of the World Council of Churches adhere to. Not only did they innovate a new definition of common prayer to meet their syncretistic needs, they even included in their description of these "non-super church" events exactly what syncretism is. Again, they stated that "'Interconfessional common prayer' is usually prepared for specific ecumenical events. It is an opportunity to celebrate together *drawing from the resources of a variety of traditions*" [17]. The very definition of the word Syncretism is "the combination of different forms of belief or practice," which is what they are advocating for at these WCC events [18].

Is this Holy Orthodoxy? Can we imagine that this is what the Holy Apostles had in mind when they went throughout the empire proselytizing the Jews and pagans, converting them to the Church of Christ? Is this what the Holy Fathers of the Nine Ecumenical Councils had in mind when they were valiantly combating the heresies of their time? If unity is not founded on doctrinal integrity, why did they not create their own syncretistic pan-confessional organization to pray and worship together with the heretics regardless of doctrinal Orthodoxy? Why did they have to waste their time with Ecumenical Councils and Canons expressly prohibiting what these heretical ecumenist innovators are doing today within the confines of the World Council of Churches as full members?

Father Michael Pomazansky the preeminent theologian of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and the author of the famous text on Orthodox dogmatics entitled, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* gives us a concise explanation for how the Orthodox Church reviews itself. In this text he writes,

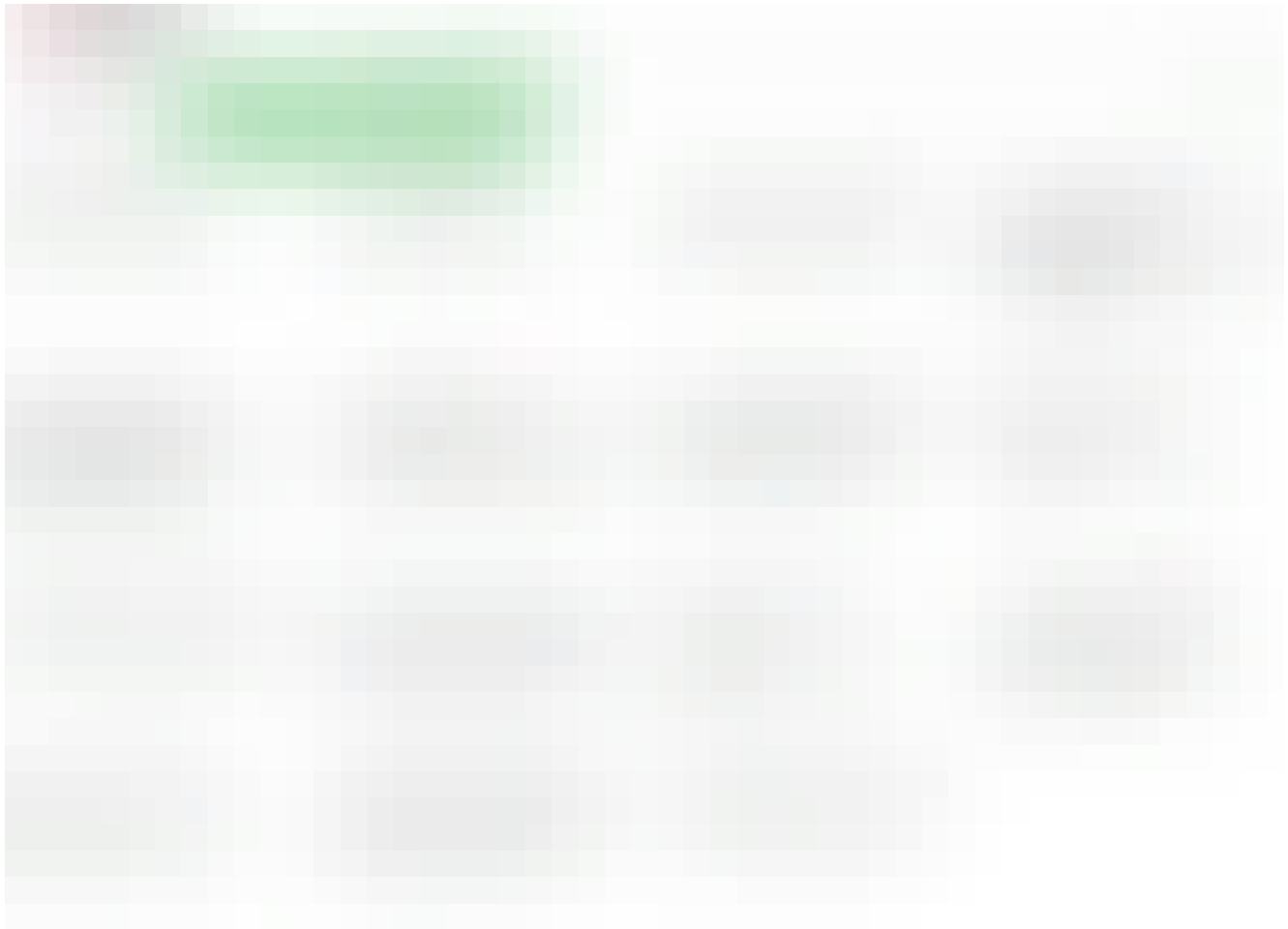
In the Greek text the word "in One," is expressed as a numeral (*en mian*). Thus, the Symbol of Faith confesses that the Church is one: (a) it is one as viewed from within itself, not divided; (b) it is one as viewed from without, that is, not having any other beside itself. Its unity consists not in the joining together of what is different in nature, but in inward agreement and unanimity. *There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all* (Eph. 4:4-6).



John X Patriarch of Antioch & All the East – Homily in the Opening Prayer of the WCC 11th General Assembly, September 1st, 2022

Depicting the Church in parables, the Saviour spoke of one flock, of one sheepfold, of one grapevine, of one foundation-stone of the Church. He gave a single teaching, a single baptism, and a single communion. The unity of the faithful in Christ comprised the subject of His High-Priestly Prayer before His sufferings on the Cross; the Lord prayed *that they all may be one* (John 17:21) [19].

Now does this, in comparison to anything that has been written and published by the heretical World Council of Churches, seem to be in line with the teaching of the Holy Orthodox Church as expressed by either the Apostles, Saints, Canons, Councils, or truly Orthodox theologians such as Father Michael Pomazansky? The answer is, of course, no. The time to break communion with your heretical bishops is long overdue, as is funding their decadent lifestyles, and their membership fees to the heretical and syncretistic organization of the World Council of Churches that represents and promotes everything but Holy Orthodoxy. In the words of Saint Paul, "*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle,*" (2 Thessalonians 2:15, KJV) not what has been taught and decided on by heretical ecumenist innovators and those theologians who are themselves outside the body of Christ.



Official Member List of Orthodox Churches in the WCC

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